(5) A film on security features of Rs. 500 denomination notes produced in English, Hindi and other regional languages is being repeatedly telecast on Doordarshan.

(6) For the benefit of public a booklet has been brought out which, *inter-alia*, describes the features of genuine notes. This booklet has been placed on RBI's website, www.rbi.org.in, besides being available to the public at RBI's Issue Offices.

(7) The Central Bureau of Investigation has created a special unit for exclusive investigation of counterfeit currency note cases.

(8) The Border Security Force has alerted its troops to be more vigilant in checking the smuggling of notes across the border. Instructions have also been issued to all State Governments particularly, border States, to be more vigilant.

(9) A third series of Rs. 500 rupee note in the new colour scheme with additional security features is in the final stage of approval and these would be issued shortly. Initially, these notes are proposed to be issued to the public in exchange for the 500 rupee notes issued in 1987, i.e., those with Ashoka Pillar watermark in which forgeries have been detected.

Rate of inflation

†1764. SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a rate of inflation has increased and reached upto 6.28 percent during the week ending 17th June, 2000; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) Yes Madam, that was the provisional inflation rate on that date.

(b) The increase in the administered prices of fuel products like LPG and Kerosene in March 2000 together with 40% increase in Diesel prices earlier in October 1999 resulted in pushing up the annual rate of inflation by over 2 percentage points.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

The buoyancy in the overall price behaviour is now beginning to stabilise and inflation has decelerated from 6.75% at the beginning of the current fiscal year to 6.12% (provisional) on July 15,2000. Wholesale prices of all commodities taken together rose by only 0.9% during the first quarter of the current financial year, which signals absence of inflationary pressures.

Working hours for filing of Income Tax Returns

1765. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the ward No. PSW 9(2) of Salary Circle, Mayur Bhawan, refuses to receive the Income Tax Returns after 4.00 p.m.;

(b) whether any working hours have been fixed to file the income tax returns in the Income Tax Department during the day;

(c) if so, whether this information has been given wide publicity for the benefit of general public, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) and (b) The general practice in the Income tax Offices in Delhi is to receive the returns till 4.00 PM on each working day so as to facilitate entering of returns received from 9.30 AM to 4.00 PM during the day in the prescribed registers and also to complete other office work by the time office closes. However, during the peak periods, special counters are set up which receive returns beyond the usual hours. This fact is given wide publicity.

(c) and (d) The working period for receipts of returns is generally known to most of the existing tax payers and their representatives. However, as and when, the time for filing returns is extended, formal publicity is given.

IT raids on Chartered Accountants

1766. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Income Tax authorities have recently raided the premises of Chartered Accountants and unearthed Hawala Racket believed to be running into several crores of rupees;